

Serial No.: 10/699,415

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this Patent Application, particularly in view of the above Amendment and the following remarks.

There is no additional fee for this Amendment because the total number of claims does not exceed twenty and the total number of independent claims does not exceed three.

Request for Telephone Interview

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to contact the undersigned to schedule a telephone interview to discuss the merits of the referenced U.S. Patent Application.

Amendments to Claims

Applicants have amended Claim 11 by adding a requirement for the ignition pressure to be relieved to the ambient environment. This Amendment is supported in the Specification at Page 12, lines 4-11.

Applicants have amended Claim 12 by adding the limitations of original Claim 11.

The above Amendment adds no new matter to this Patent Application.

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Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 11, 16, 17 and 22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), as being anticipated by Joyce, U.S. Patent 5,435,716 or Joyce, U.S. Patent 6,435,140. These rejections are respectfully traversed, particularly in view of the above Amendment and the following remarks.

Applicants' claimed invention specifically requires the pressure relief void to be sized large enough to relieve an ignition pressure from the combustion chamber to the ambient environment upon ignition of the fuel and air mixture. The Joyce Patents teach retaining ignition pressure within the combustion chamber. For example, the abstract of U.S. Patent 6,435,140 states that a permeable flexible member forms a portion of the combustion chamber wall and is displaceable *to provide volume changes*. The Joyce Patents do not teach relieving the ignition pressure from the combustion chamber to the ambient environment. Directly to the contrary, the Joyce Patents teach retaining the ignition pressure within the combustion chamber.

For these reasons, Applicants believe that the above Amendment and remarks overcome the rejection of Claims 11, 16, 17 and 22 in view of each of the Joyce Patents.

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Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 18-21 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), as being unpatentable over Joyce '140 Patent or the Joyce '716 Patent, in view of Brandt et al., U.S. Patent 5,797,358. This rejection is respectfully traversed, particularly in view of the above Amendment and the following remarks.

Claims 18-21 each ultimately depend upon and further limit independent Claim 11. For the same reasons as discussed above, Applicants believe that neither the Joyce '716 Patent nor the Joyce '140 Patent teaches the invention of Claim 11 and thus does not teach the invention of Claims 18-21. Furthermore, the Brandt et al. Patent does not teach or suggest relieving ignition combustion products from the combustion chamber to the ambient environment.

For the above reasons, Applicants believe that the above Amendment overcomes the rejection of Claims 18-21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

Allowable Subject Matter

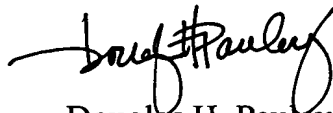
Applicants understand that Claims 12-15 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten into independent form. Applicants have rewritten Claim 12 into independent form. Because each of Claims 13-15 ultimately depend upon and further limit Claim 12, Applicants believe that Claims 12-15 are now in condition for allowance.

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Conclusion

Applicants believe that the above Amendment and remarks address each and every issue raised by the Examiner and overcome each and every objection and rejection. However, should the Examiner detect any remaining issue, Applicants kindly request the Examiner to contact the undersigned, preferably by telephone, in an effort to expedite examination of this Patent Application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Douglas H. Pauley", written in a cursive style.

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